

TRIUMPH OF THE ECONOMIC VIRTUES
239

neglecting of our more valuable interests/'
wrote a
Scottish divine in 1709, when Glasgow was
on the eve
of a triumphant outburst of commercial
enterprise, " I
humbly think will be written upon our
judgment. . . ."
I am sure the Lord is remarkably frowning
upon our
trade . . . since it was put in the room of
religion."⁷¹

In England, the growing disposition to
apply exclu-
sively economic standards to social
relations evoked
from Puritan writers and divines vigorous
protests
against usurious interest, extortionate
prices and the
oppression of tenants by landlords. The
faithful,
it was urged, had interpreted only too
literally the
doctrine that the sinner was saved, not by
works, but
by faith. Usur[^]J[^]1 in time of Popery an
odious
thing,"⁷² had become a scandal. Professors,
by their
covetousness, caused the enemies of the
reformed re-
ligion to blaspheme.⁷³ The exactions of the
forestaller
and regrater were never so monstrous or
so immune
from interference. The hearts of the rich
were never
so hard, nor the necessities of the poor so
neglected.

⁷¹ The poor able to work are suffered to beg
; the im-
potent, aged and sick are not sufficiently
provided for,
but almost starved with_ the allowance of
\$d. and 4<f.
a piece a week. . . . These are the last
times indeed.
Men generally are all for themselves. And

some would
set up such, having a form of religion,
without the power
of it."⁷¹

These utterances came, however, from
that part of
the Puritan mind which looked backward.
That which
looked forward found in the rapidly growing
spirit of
economic enterprise something not
uncongenial to its
own temper, and went out to welcome it as
an ally.
What in Calvin had been a qualified
concession to
practical exigencies, appeared in some of his
later fol-
lowers as a frank idealization of the life of
the trader,
as the service of God and the training-
ground of the
soul. Discarding the suspicion of economic
motives,
which had been as characteristic of the
reformers as